



MOUNTAINS RECREATION & CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

Los Angeles River Center & Gardens
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MEMORANDUM

TO: The Governing Board

FROM:  Joseph T. Edmiston, FAICP, Hon. ASLA, Executive Officer

DATE: April 2, 2008

SUBJECT: **Agenda Item V(h): Consideration of resolution authorizing acceptance of a conservation easement over a section of a 20-foot wide walkway to be vacated by the City of Los Angeles, adjacent to the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy's Serraina Ridge property, and over a section of APN 2172-025-012, Woodland Hills.**

Staff Recommendation: That the Governing Board adopt the attached resolution authorizing acceptance of a conservation easement over a section of a 20-foot wide walkway to be vacated by the City of Los Angeles to the owner of APN 2172-025-012, adjacent to the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy's Serraina Ridge property, and over a section of APN 2172-025-012 in Woodland Hills.

Background: APN 2712-025-012 abuts a 20-foot wide City of Los Angeles-owned paper walkway that borders along the west-side of Serraina Ridge owned by the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy (Conservancy). The owners of the subject property applied for the vacation of a 20-foot wide public right-of-way, totaling 3600-square feet. The applicants intend to use a portion of the proposed vacation for access onto the subject parcel. The City of Los Angeles (City) told them that the street cannot be vacated without the Conservancy's consent because of Public Resources Code Section 33207(b). The applicants approached staff to work out a deal favorable to the protection of open space.

With the proposed deal, the applicant gains better driveway access, avoids having to mitigate for damaging an oak tree, and eliminates a public nuisance road in front of their property. The MRCA gains the elimination of a public nuisance road that leads to dumping and partying on MRCA managed Conservancy land, and new protected conservation easement land on a park adjacent private parcel and on former City-owned right-of-way. The MRCA is also assured that the proposed house on APN 2172-025-012 is well set back from parkland to reduce fuel modification and that the landscaping and fencing will have no negative affects on habitat value.

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The conservation easement will include a portion of 2172-025-012 and undeveloped portions of the proposed vacated public right-of-way. The Conservancy is expected to consider an action to conditionally waive its first right of refusal at its April meeting. All expenses will be funded by the project applicant.